

Committee: Education, Health and Environmental Affairs

Testimony on: HB0081 - Charter Counties-Enforcement of Local Building Performance Laws (Building Energy Performance Standards Act of 2022)

Organization: Environmental Justice Ministry Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church

Submitting: Nanci Wilkinson, Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church Environmental Justice Ministry

Position: Favorable

Hearing Date: February 2, 2022

Dear Mr. Chairman and Committee Members:

The Environment Justice Ministry of the Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church supports HB0061. This bill will reinforce the County's effort to reduce greenhouse gas building emissions by allowing significant penalties for non-compliance on building performance standards. The state's support is critical for Montgomery County to achieve its goal of the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 80% in 2027 and 100% by 2035.

Building Energy Performance Standards are a tool that provide a flexible pathway for building owners for reducing emissions from existing buildings. They achieve that goal by setting energy usage targets (or alternatively, greenhouse gas reduction targets) that transition buildings to be energy efficient and to all electric HVAC and water heating systems.

Montgomery County is moving towards enacting Building Energy Performance Standards legislation. However, it is currently hamstrung in enforcing any energy performance regulations by the ceiling allowed by the State of Maryland for penalties for building owners who refuse to comply with the regulations. The county penalties are severely limited at the present time. HB0061 addresses this problem by allowing up to a \$10 per square foot penalty for owners noncompliance with local regulations governing building energy performance standards. The assessed value of the property will also be considered for any offense.

Our Climate is in a state of Emergency. Please help the counties throughout Maryland achieve lower building emissions by passing SB0081.

We support this bill and recommend a FAVORABLE report in committee.

Nanci Wilkinson

EJM Team

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